στάσις

OUR POSITION ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION AND ITS RESOLUTION

I. The foundations of our position on the Cyprus Question

The general principles of the Stasis Group as regards the national question in Cyprus derive from the general principles articulated by V.I. Lenin and the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks), on the eve of the Great October Revolution. In brief, these principles are:

A. The support of "the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question": in other words, the opposition against "all national oppression or inequality", against all privileges of one nationality over others within a nation-state; and reversely, the defense of the equality of all "nations and languages" that jointly constitute a state.[i] The Stasis group therefore fully shares Lenin's view that "insofar as that is at all possible under capitalism", there is "only one solution of the national question, viz., through consistent democracy"[ii] in the administration of ethnic, linguistic, religious, etc. differences within any national state. Our conviction, like Lenin's, is that this democratism, the equal treatment of nationalities, languages, cultures, etc. within the nation-state, "distinguishes only the democratic elements in each nation (i.e., only the proletarians and *unites* them, not according to nationality, but in a profound and earnest desire to improve the entire system of state."[iii]

B. The conviction, as is already apparent in the immediately preceding statement, that it is not *a priori* futile for Marxists-Leninists to identify and support the most progressive practical solutions to a national question, even within the conditions of capitalism, which today concern the vast majority of nations on the planet. For us, Lenin's view of the task of socialists is fundamental and valuable as a legacy: they must "demand the liberation of oppressed nations in a clearly and precisely formulated political programme that takes special account of the hypocrisy and cowardice of socialists in the oppressor nations, and not in general nebulous phrases, not in empty declamations and not by way of 'relegating' the question until socialism has been achieved."[iv] For us it is indisputable that the national question, inevitably concentrating the interest and the concerns of broad masses as well as the pursuits of the bourgeoisie in a country, is not an issue that socialists are entitled to simply refer for solution to a nebulous socialist "future"; on the contrary, they must take a clear, precise and well-documented position on the question of what form of its resolution is more beneficial for the popular masses and the prospect of socialist revolution, always respecting the first fundamental principle, that of a decisive and consistent democratism toward the nationalities, languages, religions, etc., involved. Lenin showed his sober pragmatism on this question, vigorously defending the (bourgeois) model of Switzerland as the foundation for the resolution of the Russian national question: " The experience of Switzerland proves, however, that the greatest (relative) degree of national peace

can be, and has been, ensured in practice where you have a consistent (again relative) democracy throughout the state".[v]

C. As Lenin made fully clear in his relevant works, the perspective on the national question proper to Marxists is consistently and uncompromisingly that of **proletarian internationalism:** "The proletariat cannot support any consecration of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that helps to obliterate national distinctions and remove national barriers; it supports everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, or tends to merge nations".[vi]

This position dictates a very specific understanding of what is desirable in every instance when the national question in a country remains unresolved: "capitalism requires for its development the largest and most centralized possible states. *Other conditions being equal,* the class-conscious proletariat will always stand for the larger state. It will always fight against medieval particularism, and will always welcome the closest possible amalgamation of large territories in which the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie can develop on a broad basis."[vii] The unification, under terms of **democratic** centralism, as Lenin emphasizes, of different nationalities, languages, etc., within a state is therefore "a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the future socialist unity of the whole world"[viii] because, by unifying the (capitalist) economic activity of different communities, it also unifies the terrain of class struggle, dissolving those barriers bequeathed from the past that separated both capitalists and the working class.

It goes without saying, of course, that this process does not unfold undisturbed by the efforts of the most reactionary and backward sectors of the bourgeoisie to maintain former special privileges by reinforcing, in a variety of ways, the existence of national, religious, etc., divisions. It is also to be understood that the bourgeoisie **as such**, especially when it comes to feel threatened by a vigorous and decisive workers' movement, is compelled to cultivate all sorts of vertical differentiations, including national, religious, linguistic etc., divisions within the working class. This danger is present in all capitalist states and does not cancel out the fact that there is no way **forward** for the working class without the crashing of chauvinism, of racial and national prejudice, of expansionist irredentism and of the vestiges of ideas concerning "elect peoples" and destinies; without the gradual dissolution of all those divisions that fragment the proletariat and distract it from the perception of the dividing line that decides, ultimately, the character of a society as a class society, a society based on exploitation and oppression of the majority by a minority. It is one thing to remain vigilant toward the proven ability of the bourgeoisie to deploy every intrigue in order to maintain its power; it is another to be led to a phobic and essentially reactionary response to what Lenin describes as "capitalism's world-historical tendency to break down national barriers, to obliterate national distinctions, and to *assimilate* nations—a tendency which […] is one of the greatest driving forces transforming capitalism into socialism".[ix]

D. The Stasis group recognizes, along with Lenin, that it is impossible to detach the national question from the lived social hegemony of the class that poses it: "The bourgeoisie […] naturally assumes the leadership at the start of every national movement".[x] To proclaim that one is awaiting the time when the national question will be posed by the working class rather than the bourgeoisie, as if it is the former who embodies the dominant ideas within bourgeois society is in

every case an ahistorical view, and amounts to either left-wing utopianism or cynical hypocrisy. There is, however, a vast difference between pragmatically recognizing the connection of the national question with the historical initiative of the bourgeoisie and passively accepting the role of being the "tail" of such initiative. **It is a different thing to support the bourgeoisie in a specific direction and for your own purposes and to identify your goals with its own pursuits, to passively become its "tail"**: "the proletariat's policy in the national question (as in all others) supports the bourgeoisie only in a certain direction, but it never coincides with the bourgeoisie's policy. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only in order to secure national peace (which the bourgeoisie cannot bring about completely and which can be achieved only with *complete* democracy), in order to secure equal rights and to create the best conditions for the class struggle. Therefore, it is *in opposition to the practicality* of the bourgeoisie that the proletarians advance their *principles* in the national question; they always give the bourgeoisie *only conditional* support".[xi]

But how does this **partial** and **autonomously motivated** confluence with the initiative of the bourgeoisie (and more specifically, with its more progressive, because more open to national amalgamation and completion sectors) express itself? On this, too, Lenin is clear. The task of the Marxist toward the goal of national independence and completion, he writes, "is largely a negative one." The proletariat cannot go beyond a limit "in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the 'positive' activity of the *bourgeoisie* striving to *fortify* nationalism."[xii] In other words, the task of Marxists is to fight against national inequality, discrimination against specific ethnic, religious, linguistic groups, the lack of democratism and of the broadest possible civil liberties, not to support any bourgeoisie in raising the idea of national completion, unification and sovereignty to a programmatic goal, nor to transform themselves into a chorus for its metaphysical pursuits of "national destiny" or the exceptional and "elect" character of the national state. The resolution, in the direction of the greatest possible democratism and equality, of the national question is in every case a simple (though historically indispensable) means, never the end and goal of socialist action.

On the basis of the four preceding principles, we believe, the Marxist-Leninist approach to the national question is clearly distinguished from a number of other approaches, which dominate the terrain of political debate and fermentation, and which can be summed up into three trends:

- Chauvinist reaction, for which there are superior and inferior, dominant and subaltern nationalities, languages, religions, etc., i.e., the tendency of explicitly rejecting the principles of democratism and equality in the administration of the population groups of the national state; on the other end of the same bourgeois pole, bourgeois nationalism, for which the completion of national construction is the only possible and legitimate fulfillment of working masses.

- Abstract bourgeois progressivism, for which national completion, the defeat of former ethnic, religious, linguistic, etc., prejudices is synonymous with the elimination of social antagonisms as such, and for which, accordingly, it is possible to achieve social harmony without displacing the terrain of antagonism from nationality, language, etc., to social class, as if it were possible to achieve a capitalist society without antagonistic contradictions and collisions on one or another level (it is instructive here to reflect on the parody of such utopian expectations presented by the

organic turn of the capitalist and imperialist European Union toward the reanimation of precisely those nationalisms and localisms which it was supposed to terminally dissolve).

- Abstract class purism, for which the workers' movement has no place in the struggle to resolve the national question because it is framed by the bourgeoisie and so must simply await for its magical resolution in some future moment, when socialism arrives, irrespectively of the non intervention of the workers' movement and its parties in the present conditions.

E. The fifth, and final, **general** principle we believe derives from Lenin's valuable work on the national question is that the principles sketched above are **necessary, but not sufficient** tools for analyzing a **specific** national question; in other words, it is the principle that **a Marxist-Leninist politics on the national question must combine a principled politics with the specific analysis of the concrete situation**, to elucidate, in every national context, how the general principles defended by socialists should be translated to determinate conditions, taking up, of course, the responsibility and burden of correctly appraising the totality of specific factors that determine the spatially and temporally delimited translation of general principles: "The categorical requirement of Marxist theory in investigating any social question is that it be examined within definite historical limits, and, if it refers to a particular country (e.g., the national programme for a given country), that account be taken of the specific features distinguishing that country from others in the same historical epoch."[xiii] We therefore move to a brief exposition of precisely these specific features of the Cyprus Question, as regards the way it was shaped historically and as regards the way it is posed for Cypriots today.

II. The specific determinations of the Cyprus Question

A. The Cyprus Question does not arise in 1974, with the Greek coup and the Turkish invasion (though one must observe that even the collusion between these two events is often ignored in attempts to explain the character of the question). What happened in 1974 was rather the culmination and consequent military crystallization (as status quo) of dimensions already clearly encoded during the EOKA struggle, under the leadership of Georgios Grivas, for so-called "national self-determination." The very categories deployed by the relevant entry in Wikipedia[xiv] reveal an (only apparent) paradox, which is also the foundation of the "national particularity" of Cyprus: EOKA's ideology is presented as "Anti-imperialism", "Enosis" [Unification with Greece), "Nationalism", "Anticommunism". How can an "anti-imperialist" struggle also be an anticommunist one, as EOKA's struggle undoubtedly was? The historical appraisal of the multitude of attacks against the corresponding targets compels us to acknowledge that this strugge developed a front both against the Left, particularly the communist Left, within both of the two large ethnic communities of Cyprus, and against the Turkish Cypriot community as such (irrespectively of ideology and on the basis of ethnic identity). Accepting that such a struggle was simultaneously anticolonial in character entails accepting that there can be a three-front struggle that does not end in the immediate, crushing defeat of those who undertake it. Even if we posit, then, that EOKA aimed simultaneously, and with the same zest, against British colonialism, the overwhelming evidence of its anticommunist and anti-Turkish Cypriot strategic aims compels us to accept that the anticolonial component could not have been the dominant and regulative factor, since it is impossible to wage an anticolonial struggle when one is also advancing (through violent means) the ethnic and ideological division of the local population,

while also excluding from participation in such struggle (again through violent means) the most progressive and dynamic elements of that population. Besides, history hasn't presented us with any anti-colonial struggle divorced from any universal ideal of emancipation—a point the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) Nikos Zahariades correctly made, despite his own support for the line of Enosis, when throwing doubt on the anticolonial character of the EOKA struggle and of its leader in 1955: "The unification of Cyprus with Greece cannot mean the preservation or the exacerbation of the subjection of Turks, but also emancipation for the Turkish minority of the island, on the basis of its full national independence. Claiming the right of self-determination and separation for the Greeks, we cannot refuse this same right to the Turkish minority. Otherwise, we would be undermining the entire case of Cyprus liberation. You cannot be free and hold another slave, forcing them to fight you in order to emancipate themselves. This is what was declared by the great Lenin, who is honored in our days by all progressive humanity".[xv] The first factor of the determination of the Cyprus Question is then the **abortive character of the struggle for national independence that was approved by the local and the "metropolitan" bourgeoisies**, and which bequeathed to the nascent state of 1960 and its historical evolution the following:

- The decoupling of anticolonial and anti-imperialist struggle from the demand for universal emancipation that characterizes every progressive movement historically; and thus the voiding or or annulment of the anticolonial and anti-imperialist nature of the struggle

- The linking of the national struggle to anticommunism

- The decoupling of **self-determination** and **independence**, since both EOKA and its applauders in Greece (including the members of the 6th Broad Plenary of the KKE who removed Zahariades from the party) connected self-determination from England to Enosis with (subsumption within) Greece (while corresponding tendencies developed within the other large ethnic community of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriots)

- The consequent reinforcement of all the divisive and disintegration-inducing tendencies within Cypriot society from the very beginning, through the conversion of Cypriot nationalism to a tool for use by the irredentist nationalisms of the Greek and Turkish bourgeoisies; the "Cypriot national struggle", in other words, was the convenient cover for foreign national pursuits of an irredentist and expansionist character

- The reinforcement, through the weakening of the unity and genuineness of anticolonial struggle, of the long-term regulative role both of the colonizer (the United Kingdom), and of the NATOist (since 1952), repressively anticommunist and autocratically ruled "local order-keepers" better known as the Greek and Turkish bourgeoisie. Thus, the "Cyprus Question" ended up being the question of two, interlaced pairs of overseas antagonisms: that between Greece and Turkey, and that (less visibly but no less importantly) between the United Kingdom and the United States (since Cyprus constitutes one of the last bastions of geopolitical influence for the once omnipotent Britain, that came, after the 1950s, to be claimed by the succeeding imperialist hegemon, the United States). As is customary in such cases, and as it was already during the era when Lenin attacked national chauvinism among Social Democrats, "anti-imperialism" becomes a means for inter-imperialist polemics, since every "player" (including, as Lenin showed, of

many of the "socialists" within imperialist states), locates "imperialism" in the motives of their opponents, never in their own.

B. The second factor for the determination of the Cyprus Question emerges, if we focus on the history of the Republic of Cyprus, already during the period of the Bicommunal Troubles of 1963-64, and moves into a stage of intensification after the coup organized by the Greek dictatorship and the Turkish invasion of 1974: we are referring to the gradual displacement, especially of the Turkish Cypriot population, from the country. Of course, Turkish Cypriot immigration had started far earlier, during the period of the conversion of Cyprus from an Ottoman possession to a British colony, and it continued quite actively during the period of the first World War. But this immigration current was reinforced further by another, which arose, to a large extent, because of the activities of EOKA and the prospect of Enosis with Greece during the 1950s, as well as due to the internal and external migration caused by the Bicommunal Troubles of 1963-64. After 1974, the issue was newly exacerbated when it comes to the presence of Turkish Cypriots, due to the economic isolation of the North and the adoption, on Turkey's side, of a policy of importing populations from mainland Turkey (it is thus calculated that approximately 130.000 Turkish Cypriots left the TRNC for Great Britain from 1974-5 till today).[xvi] Hence, while between 120.000 and 150.000 Turkish Cypriots live in the TRNC today, the population of Turkish Cypriot descent in Turkey is calculated as approximating 500.000, and that in the United Kingdom to 300.000-400.000[xvii], constituting the majority of Turkish-speaking UK immigrants[xviii] (approximately 65%). The evolution of the Cyprus Question as a whole, then, beginning already before independence and continuing unabated after 1960, is characterized by the displacement of Turkish Cypriots, first through the impact of Greek expansionist ambitions as expressed by the terrorist tactics of G. Grivas' EOKA, then through Turkish expansionist ambitions, as expressed by the population policy of Turkish governments, particularly after 1974. The drastic economic crisis that impacted Greece after 2009-10, on the other hand, abruptly increased the number of Greek immigrants within the Republic of Cyprus. According to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs 31.474 Greeks migrated to Cyprus between 2010 and 2015[xix], whereas the total population of the Republic of Cyprus in 2011 was 838.897[xx] (Greek immigrants from this five-year period therefore constituting around 3.75% of the total population of the Republic of Cyprus as measured in the 2011 census, and 5.5% of the total population of Greek Cypriots in 2014 (when their number was calculated at 572.000[xxi] and with a tendency to decrease). As regards the number of Turkish settlers, though we do not seem to have accurate and reliable data, it must be taken as almost certain that it is at least somewhat larger than that of Turkish Cypriots within the TRNC.[xxii]

In sum, we have a situation in which:

- The number of Turkish Cypriots living outside Cyprus is many times larger than that within the TRNC

- The number of Turkish settlers is larger than that of Turkish Cypriots within the TRNC

- The populational correlation between Greeks and Greek Cypriots within the ROC has changed significantly after 2010, at the detriment of Greek Cypriot presence in the ROC

What does this mean? It means that **the still unresolved "Cyprus Question" tends increasingly to transform itself to a Greek-Turkish Question, and not simply at the level of the principally military power of the two "mother countries" that constitute, along with the UK, Cyprus's "guarantors", but at the level of the composition of the population of Cyprus**. It means that for decades, and due to a series of events, the political subject of "the Cypriot people", on whose behalf all the powers involved speak (often melodramatically) is consistently marginalized as the subject who is to determine the fate of Cyprus (it is important here to bear in mind that a series of factors that shaped positive or balance-reinforcing conditions in Cyprus—the existence of the Soviet bloc, Arab secular and anticolonial nationalism, the Non-Allied nations—has either ceased to exist or to be able to play the role of a positive counterbalance). It means, subsequently, that **the resolution of the national question is at this point synonymous with the historical survival of Cypriots as politico-historical subjects, and that its non resolution is synonymous with their disappearance from history, with their place being terminally ceded to the two nation-states that co-shaped the Cyprus Question as an international problem seeking a solution**. This observation leads us to the third determination, which in our view is both the most visible in public debate within the Marxist left and the most problematic: that of "energy-driven antagonisms".

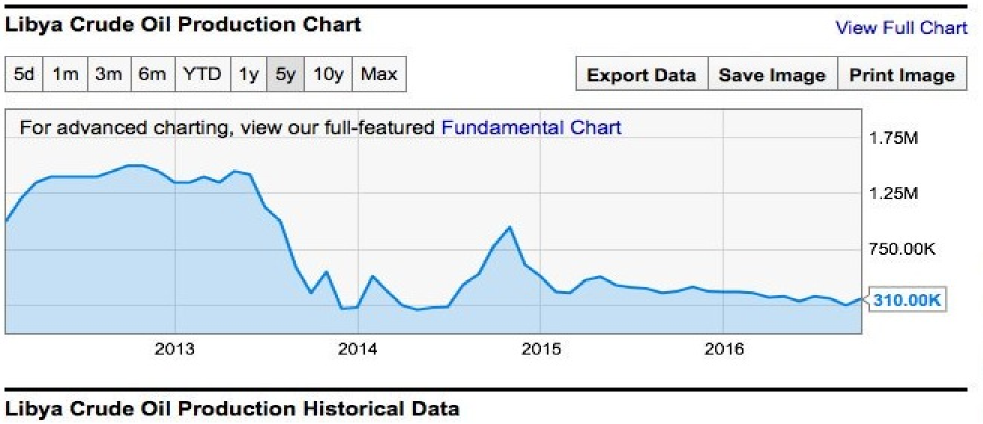
C. The basic argument both of a section of the bourgeoisie that appears to support some kind of arrangement of the Cyprus issue, as well as of a critique of the negotiations for a solution from an allegedly Marxist standpoint concerns the significance of the exploitation of the natural gas reserves located in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cyprus and the antagonisms that emerge on the basis of this exploitation. However, the very self-evidence of the conflict and tensions involved between several bourgeois national "players" tends to obscure some basic facts concerning the nature of energy-driven antagonisms today.

Energy, as is well known, is a vitally significant commodity for a basic and fundamental reason: it is the natural resource that gets industrial production into motion. Therefore, when there is talk of "energy-driven antagonisms", what is almost automatically implied is that there is antagonism over more and cheaper industrial production. But that leads to an immediate question: given the fact that almost everyone agrees that the course of the global capitalist economy has, to one degree or another, been slowed down after the burst of the financial bubble in 2008, that the rates of development in a number of powerful capitalist states have been frozen into near zero levels, that the crisis has created consistent trends in underconsumption in several countries, that is has generated stagnant, overacummulated capital and the scaling down of markets, why should there be antagonisms over the control of **more expanded** industrial production?

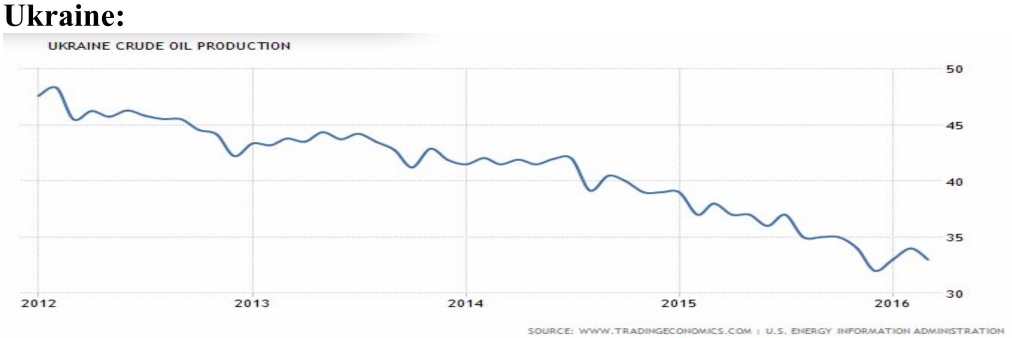
Further, one would expect, since (as it is widely supposed) energy-driven antagonisms have been intensified, since, in other words, the struggle between states or the exploitation and transport of energy resources has grown more acute, that the price of energy would correspondingly increase. Yet the data provided by OPEC on the price of crude oil show a drastic drop, from 107.46 US dollars per barrel in 2011 to less than half: only 40.68 US dollars per barrel in 2016.[xxiii] As CNN Money justifiably observes on the occasion of the economic collapse of Venezuela, one of the principal victims of the drastic drop in the price of petrol (along with Russia and Saudi Arabia), "the main reason for the low prices is that there's too much supply globally."[xxiv]

In the period after the outbreak of the global capitalist crisis, finally, there have emerged three main fronts of imperialist intervention, all of them in countries that are rich in energy resources and/or energy-transportation infrastructures: Libya, Ukraine, Syria. One would expect that, since “energy-driven antagonisms” relate to who (which country) will exploit resources **more** in order to **increase** its production, the blood shed in these three countries would translate into an increase in energy production. Let’s look at the relevant data:

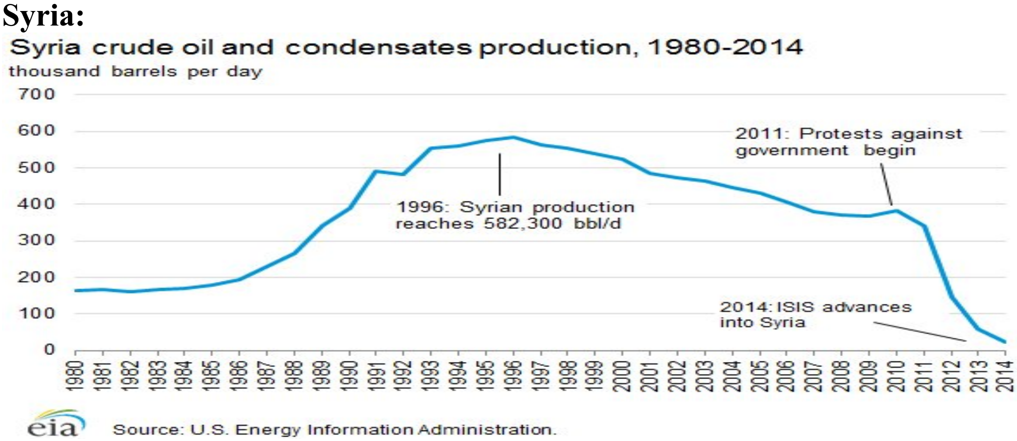
Libya:



Ukraine:



Syria:



Undoubtedly, the era we have witnessed since 2008 has seen a number of new and ambitious projects for the exploitation and transportation of energy reserves; equally undoubtedly,

however, none of them has actually materialized. Undoubtedly, too, the same period is punctuated by military conflicts of an imperialist character; but, equally undoubtedly, none of them has led either to the increase of the rate of exploitation of energy resources, or to some clear direction in the global correlation of forces: despite the vast destruction caused in Syria and secondarily in the Ukraine, for instance, their geopolitical and economic future remains unclear and volatile, since all the forces involved in the collision take "one step forward and two steps back", without any of them being able to impose its aims with indisputable success, while their situation as states can be described through the paradox "neither war nor peace"[xxv] (while it is unclear what the outcome of the western intervention in Libya politically will be). To return to the Cyprus Question: it is beyond doubt that a section of the bourgeoisies of the countries involved referred to the developmental possibilities and opportunities that a resolution on their own grounds might bring; but it is equally beyond doubt that no bourgeoisie seems determined to "move the heavens and the earth" to attain this resolution, that the basic players are "one foot in and one foot out" of the negotiations, and that, despite pompous generalizations on "imperialism desperately seeking a solution to the Cyprus issue so as to exploit available energy resources", the countries involved have been moving with the same hesitation and reserve toward that prospect that one observes in their movements in other zones of international conflict.

What we retain from the above are two things:

- First, that the **framework** within which one embeds the notion of "energy-driven antagonisms" is very important, though the vast majority of those who refer to the term studiously avoid clarifying this framework: the nature of energy-driven antagonisms within economic environments characterized by dynamic development, ambition and self-confidence in the bourgeoisies involved is very different from that in contexts characterized by long-term investment cautiousness, prolonged recession and the heretofore unresolved inability to mobilize stagnant capital (indications that point to a capitalist crisis that is **anything but cyclical in nature**). In the former case, that of a cycle of crisis and recovery which characterized the stage of liberal capitalism, collisions relate to the drive to determine the hegemon over competitors, i.e., they have a "positive" aim; in the latter, that of long-term, secular crisis, it is far more likely that conflicts derive from their principle (and "negative") goal of impeding the opponent's course—which is to say, they relate principally to the **destruction of possible advantages for other others, not to the imposition of a specific developmental orientation**.

- Secondly, that the ensemble of the elements that became visible in this period, as it was briefly summarized above, does not provide evidence to the claim that what characterizes "energy-driven antagonisms" falls into the former category, and that it is therefore not at all clear that bourgeois and imperialist forces are pursuing a solution to the Cyprus Question at any cost and with the aim of exploiting energy-based prospects, nor that the framework within which we can intepret the movements and pursuits of the bourgeoisies involved is generally and abstractly that of "energy-driven antagonisms."

D. The last structural determination that we consider important, especially in the current conjuncture, concerns the rather ominous coincidence of the population changes we have analyzed above and of the negative developments in the internal affairs of Greece and Turkey after 2010. First, first Greece and later on Turkey entered into a period of intense economic

crisis, despite the fact that the growth of the Turkish economy during the initial period of Greek economic collapse has widened the gulf between the bourgeoisies of the two "order keepers" of the Eastern Mediterranean for the benefit of Turkey. Secondly, the economic crisis led both countries to political crises, to the intensification of state repression, the shrinking of basic political and syndicalist freedoms and the reinforcement of fascist tendencies. In the present stage therefore, Greece and Turkey influence the Cyprus Question as **multiply impeding factors**: because their power over the Greek Cypriot and Trkish Cypriot bourgeoisie turns increasingly into a "break" against their further development; because their military power gains ever more weight in their control of their "brother" bourgeoisies (through the camouflaged and sanitized threat of their status as "guarantor powers"); because both Greece and Turkey have long been exporters of NATOism, on the one hand, and, especially after 2010, fascism on the other (it is sufficient here to refer to the protagonistic role of Greece's Golden Dawn in founding and organizing the fascist ELAM party in the Republic of Cyprus, and in the increase of the fascist threat in the TRNC through the luben support networks of the AKP, the Gray Wolves, etc.). From this standpoint too, the independence, the separation of the Cypriot bourgeoisie from those of the "mother countries" is far more likely to guarantee some basic freedoms to worker and popular strata than the perpetuation of the current status quo which already, and on the occasion of the "patriotic" choruses of a number of parties in Cyprus, Greece and Turkey has beyond any doubt strengthened national chauvinism, intolerance, and the defense of ideologies of at least implicit ethnic cleansing in all three countries when it comes to the Cyprus Question. The so called "ambient atmosphere" that is being shaped on the island, thanks, to a significant degree, to the intervention of the party apparatuses of the "mother countries", both "Left" and "Right", is darker and more ominous for a progressive and democratic (and certainly, a socialist) future for the Cypriot people than ever.

II. The directions we consider vital for the form of a resolution of the Cyprus Question

The preceding grounding of general principles of Marxism-Leninism on the national question and the analysis of the specific determinations of the Cyprus Question leads Stasis to the following conclusions:

- First, the thesis that, independently of the fact that the discussion concerning a solution to the national question is, as it always has been, framed by the bourgeoisie, it is a Marxist task to intervene within the existing framework of this discussion. In other words, the thesis that Marxists must position themselves specifically and taking into consideration existing facts, instead of evading issues by resorting to millennialist expectations or to entirely negative, disaster-centered remarks as to the fact that there can be no solution as long as the question of power is not solved *in toto* (to resolve it in *toto* is **their task**, not the task of a metaphysically conceived law of history, and it depends on their application of the correct tactics at every historical moment and for every political dilemma).

- Secondly, the thesis that **Marxism-Leninism is by principle incompatible** with any approach to the Cyprus Question that accepts, directly or indirectly, the de facto division of the Cyprus working class, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious chauvninism, the refusal of equality and of the greatest possible democratism in the administration of the state. Such unacceptable, on the basis of principle, approaches, include all approaches to Turkish Cypriots as a mere "minority"

that is not entitled to anything except limited cultural and religious rights, and of course, all tendencies to represent them as a conscious or unwitting "Fifth Column" of "the enemy."

- Third, the thesis, that for the reasons just indicated above, **the Cypriot state will either be bicommunal (as it already was in the 1960 Constitution) or will not exist**, except as a transitional abortion, destined to be annexed to the reactionary NATOist states of Greece and Turkey.

- Fourth, the thesis that the concrete form of the developments that derived from the action of EOKA, TMT and other extreme right wing paramilitary groups, both during the 1950s and during the Bicommunal Troubles of the 1963-64, imposes, as a necessary form of the Cypriot state, Bizonalism, at least for a transitional period that is necessary for the genuine reconstitution of trust between nationalities and the bulding of those popular bonds of solidarity and common struggle that constitute the only viable and long-term guarantee of victory over intolerance and ethnic bloodshed in any country.

On the basis of these four theses, Stasis underlines the crucial importance of the following demands, regarding the concrete form of a resolution, as demands adopted by the people's movement (a movement of the working class, the peasantry and the progressive elements of the petty bourgeoisie) in both communities:

Governance:

- We consider absolutely necessary, for the viability and functionality of the federal state, that Education, Health and Social Security should be exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Federal state within the Constitution.

- The greatest possible equality in the representation of communities in all areas of government must be constitutionally guaranteed.

- The election of officers must be based on the form of the cross-checked vote.

- There should be a common labor law framework, constitutionally guaranteed, and supervised by the Labor Unions

Security-Guarantees:

- The definition of the framework of the operation of the Federal police and army is absolutely necessary for the security of the implementation of a resolution. Federal military and police forces must be staffed equally by all communities and must have explicit and constitutionally guaranteed jurisdiction, which must include zero tolerance to any demonstration of racial, religious, chauvinist and nationalist hatred, as well as guarantee of the security of the state from any external threat.

- The only functional and possibly acceptable form of guarantees for us is the implementation of a possible agreement for resolution by the permanent members of the Security Council of the

United Nations. **Any scenario that involves the deployment of a multinational military or police force in Cyprus is simply the beginning of the definitive NATOization of the island**.

- We consider the prospect of a small military force of Turkish and Greek troops (under the strict supervision of the Federal Security Forces) a possibility, given that the timeframe for the presence of such forces is strictly limited, and only to allay the justified anxieties and insecurities of the constituent communities during the initial period of implementing the resolution.

British Military Bases:

The British military bases, an outgrowth of colonialism and of the antagonism between the USA and the United Kingdom, constitute an institution whose aim is to forward the imperialist interests principally of the United Kingdom, but by extension of NATO as well, within the broader area of the Eastern Mediterranean. Their existence after a resolution of the Cyprus Question is unfortunately a prospect that, realistically speaking, the existing worker movement can not throw into question, given that this movement is, both because of the lack of resolution in the national question as well as because of the responsibilities of the local Left, very much behind the demands posited by placing the existence of British military bases in question while also attaining a jointly acceptable resolution (though it should not be forgotten that even in countries where there was a revolutionary change, like in Cuba, the issue of imperialist military bases that guaranteed Constitutional legitimation after formal independence remains unresolved).[xxvi]

As the victim of the collusion beween colonialism and the Cold War activities of the extreme Right in the region, Cyprus has inherited, within the Treaty of its constitution as a Republic, a state of affairs that is unacceptable for a contemporary nation-state, an eyesore for any vision of national independence and sovereignty. We understand the pragmatic difficulty that this creates for negotiations and do not share the logic of a cheap maximalism of demands; on the other hand, it is impossible to remain a Marxist-Leninist and to reconcile yourself passively with the perpetuation of colonialism in the 21st century, in the name of any pragmatism.

Consequently, we consider a fundamental task for the people's movement, both before and after a resolution, the constitution of **a united anti-imperialist front in both communities**, which will set the parameters and define the tactical means of struggle, within and outside Cyprus, **against the existence and function of British bases on the island and against any operations, within the territory of the British bases, against states and peoples in the broader region of the Midde East, North Africa, etc**.

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Faithful to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and to our intention to assist in the resolution o the Cyprus Issue for the reunification of people and entirely convinced that a prospective resolution of the Bizonal Bicommunal Federation type, despite its problematic aspects and particularities, will form the first step in the common struggle of the Cypriot people for a Cyprus liberated from all forms of oppression, a free and socialist Cyprus,

Stasis.

Notes

[i] V.I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20: December 1913-August 1914, trans. Bernard Isaacs and Joe Fineberg (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), pp. 34, 28.

[ii] Ibid., p. 40.

[iii] Ibid., p. 43.

[iv] V.I. Lenin, "Socialist Revolution and Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22: December 1915-July 1916, trans. Yuri Sdobnikov (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), p. 147.

[v] V.I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", pp. 41-42.

[vi] Ibid., p. 35.

[vii] Ibid., p. 45.

[viii] Ibid., p.46.

[ix] Ibid., p. 28.

[x] V.I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 409.

[xi] Ibid., pp. 409-410.

[xii] V.I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", pp. 34-35.

[xiii] V.I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, pp. 400-401.

[xiv] Cf. https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Εθνική_Οργάνωσις_Κυπρίων_Αγωνιστών

[xv] Nikos Zahariades, "Against imperialists and traitorous Cyprus-mongerers", https://parapoda.wordpress.com/2016/04/03/ν-ζαχαριάδη-ενάντια-στους-ιμπεριαλισ/

[xvi] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_Cypriots

[xvii] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_Cypriots

[xviii] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_Cypriot_diaspora

[xix] http://www.e-radio.gr/post/63892/h-metanasteysh-twn-ellhnwn-ta-xronia-ths-krishs-se-arithmoys

[xx] https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Απογραφή_Πληθυσμού_2011_(Κύπρος)

[xxi] http://www.tanea.gr/news/politics/article/5130198/meiopshfia-o-ellhnokypriakos-plhthysmos-sthn-kypro-symfwna-me-meleth/

[xxii] In 2006, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Cyprus Republic calculated Turkish settlers at approximately 160.000 and Turkish Cypriots at approximately 88.000—approximately a 2:1 ratio. http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa15_gr/mfa15_gr?OpenDocument

In an article of the newspaper "Politis" (2014), and in an argument against the number publicized by the Institute for Population and Immigration Policy of Cyprus, the total number of TRNC inhabitants was calculated at 300.000-400.000. http://politis.com.cy/article/dimo-sio-grafia-tou-kafene-kai-epikinduni

[xxiii] www.statista.com/statistics/262858/change-in-opec-crude-oil-prices-since-1960

[xxiv] http://money.cnn.com/2016/08/17/news/economy/venezuela-oil-prices/

[xxv] Cf. Announcement of the Antifascist Volunteer Group of Donbas Interunit: "There are still daily confrontations and people continue to die, but day by day military activity decreases. We have a situation of 'neither war nor peace' which might last for a number of years." https://solidarityantifascistukraine.wordpress.com/2017/01/23/interunit_anastellei_stratiwtikes_drasthriothtes_sto_donbass/

[xxvi] On the related, constitutionally speaking, issue of the onerous persistence of the infamous Guantanamo base in Cuba see http://www.coha.org/the-guantanamo-base-a-u-s-colonial-relic-impeding-peace-with-cuba/